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ABSTRACT

This list of eight guidelines includes a brief review of the literature related to differentiated staffing and a description of the historical development and implementation of differentiated staffing in one school district. It is based on the Mentor Ohio Exempted Village School District's five years' experience with differentiated staffing in two open-space schools and results directly from a 3-year ESEA Title III project. The Mentor model concentrated on two major goals: a) determining the effect of differentiated staffing upon students, staff, program, and the teaching-learning process and b) the development and implementation of a model program for individualized professional and paraprofessional growth needs, both individual and organizational. Each of the eight guidelines is presented with a rationale based on the Mentor experience. The overall recommendation of the report is that theoretical rather than empirically tested models of differentiated staffing should be imposed since the benefits of early implementation of such a program will far outweigh the few additional problems resulting from lack of pilot testing the procedures.

(Author/HMD)

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GUIDELINES FOR DIFFERENTIATED STAFFING THE MENTOR EXPERIENCE

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
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MENTOR EXEMPTED VILLAGE DISTRICT SCHOOLS
MENTOR, OHIO

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March, 1974

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INTRODUCTION

I. OVERVIEW

In February, 1974, the Mentor Exempted Village School District concluded a three-year ESEA Title III project entitled *Model Teacher Education-Differentiated Staff Assessment*. One of the project objectives was the compilation, publication, and dissemination of a series of guidelines. These guidelines, including a description of both historical development and process activities were to be based on one school district's experience with the implementation of differentiated staffing. It is the objective of this document to present those guidelines in the hope that other school systems may be able to benefit from the Mentor experience.

Chapter I, an introduction, contains a brief review of the literature related to differentiated staffing; Chapter II deals with the Mentor Model, Planning, and Pre-Implementation; Chapter III details the Title III project as an aid to implementation; and Chapter IV presents conclusions. Recommendations based on the Mentor experience are expressed as guidelines throughout the text.

From a historical perspective, it is important to note that implementation of differentiated staffing in the Mentor Public Schools preceded the beginning of project activities by two years. Accordingly, Chapter II focuses on this experience in a combination of historical description and the extraction of significant guidelines for use by other school systems. During the first two years of differentiated staffing implementation in Mentor, it quickly became apparent that there was a strong need for a mechanism with which to monitor the experience and respond to newly emerging needs as these were identified by involved staff. It was this need which ultimately led to the application for the Title III project discussed in Chapter III.

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

An appropriate introduction to differentiated staffing might be the following quotation from *Nation's School* (1970):

For educational trend watchers, the blue ribbon candidate of the 1970's has arrived. Its name is Differentiated Staffing and it is being carefully fed, watched, and nurtured in an almost clinical environment.

At its current stage of evolution, differentiated staffing has no precise definition. It does, however, involve a restructuring of the school organization and calls for a redeployment of staff that will provide for optimum staff behavior and performance while affording greater staff autonomy in determining and furthering their professional or paraprofessional development. Characteristically, a differentiated staff includes teachers at various responsibility and pay levels, assigned on the basis of training, experience, competencies, or goals according to subject, service, or performance categories.

The Dwight Allen Model for Differentiated Staffing

The current impetus given differentiated staffing can be attributed to Dr. Dwight Allen of the University of Massachusetts. His original model of differentiated staffing was developed and presented to the California State Board of Education in the Spring of 1966. It was later implemented and further altered by teachers in the Temple City, California, School System under a grant from the Charles F. Kettering Foundation (Rand and English, 1968).

The Allen-Temple City Plan changes and enlarges the role of teachers by increasing their autonomy and decision-making powers; by offering new career advancement opportunities; and by placing them in a position to assume a regulatory function in the profession. It has, at its core, a four level teacher hierarchy -- Master Teacher, Senior Teacher, Staff Teacher, and Associate Teacher -- which incorporates a system of auxiliary support personnel.

The backbone of differentiated staffing is the staff teacher whose qualifications are equal to those specified for regular classroom teachers. The staff teacher's ancillary housekeeping, clerical, and other non-professional duties are reduced and absorbed by paraprofessional assistants. Deployment of such assistants affords professional staff members additional time for instructionally oriented tasks.

The master teacher is primarily responsible for the application of curriculum and instructional innovations. He is accepted as a master practitioner, a learning engineer, and a skilled diagnostician of the teaching-learning process. To coin Allen's phrase, he is a "teacher's teacher." In the role of a director of

instruction, the master teacher heads a subject area group or team, functioning in a particular academic area or learning level. The master teacher is the "self renewal unit of the organization." The primary function of the master teacher is to introduce new concepts and ideas into the teaching organization and the school. A master teacher is expected to be relatively well versed in educational research and must be able to translate research findings into operational instructional activities. Advocates of Allen's Differentiated Teaching Staff Assignments maintain that such a program is more responsive to the interests, ability and needs of individual learners.

The McKenna Model for Differentiated Staffing

A second alternate to traditional staffing patterns is one proposed by Bernard McKenna (1967), Associate Secretary of the National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards, which utilizes a five-level hierarchy and more closely relates to individual needs and tasks than to the levels or ranks within the teaching hierarchy as conceived by Allen. McKenna maintains that the acquisition of knowledge and skills by pupils comes predominately under the purview of computer-based instruction, television, simulation, laboratory-type and on-the-job experience which define a learning setting; wherein it is possible to allocate classroom teaching time to other tasks and distribute pupils' time among a variety of learning experience to accomplish the total objectives of the schools. He further maintains that the organization of such an instructional environment will, of itself, cause sharp change.

McKenna's model is based on the assumption that increasing the amount of time available to teachers will, and should, afford them greater opportunity for developing interpersonal attitudes and behavior in pupils. McKenna has delineated the following staff structure of a differentiated staff model:

- **Facilitator of Attitude and Interpersonal Behavior Development:**
Human relations and attitude skills
- **Developer of Talents and Aptitudes:** A skill for developing talent
- **Identifier of Talents:** Skill in promoting exploration in broad fields
- **Liberal Enlightener:** Skill as a master presenter
- **Teacher Technologist:** Skill in administering basic skills and knowledges

McKenna believes that his rationale and model have implications for teacher education and continuing professional growth. He supports the thesis that current emphasis and course content of teacher education programs must

undergo substantial revision if teachers are to be prepared to meet the emerging interpersonal demands of society.

It becomes obvious that the number of alternates being proposed to existing monolithic teaching structures or hierarchies is growing as the profession gives more attention and thought to the problem of achieving quality education, and that other more far-reaching, and perhaps more creative, models for staff deployment, preparation, and development will be conceptualized.

Building a Rationale

Any rationale developed for differentiated staffing must evolve from a dissatisfaction with current traditional staffing patterns and practices.

Many of the assumptions currently underlying the present-day organization and operation of schools are being questioned and attacked. Several of these assumptions are discussed below.

The first of these assumptions, that *all teachers are equally competent, skilled, and successful*, is evident from current staffing and salary practices. Cocherille (1969) feels that the concept of "equal competency" has become an operational premise in today's schools. According to Dr. Cocherille, "The teaching profession at this time has not developed career patterns which allow capable people to advance and stay in the teaching segment of the profession."

Edelfelt (1969) expresses the same concerns somewhat differently: "The job of the teacher has become unmanageable . . . no single individual has the competency, energy, and time to deal effectively with all the responsibilities assigned to one teacher."

A second assumption underlying current school operation which is being questioned is that *educational programs and curricula of the past are relevant for today's youth*. The role of the teacher as one who implements standardized curriculum for all students has led to the operationalization of this assumption. Not all teachers are skilled or trained in the area of curriculum development. Those teachers that do possess traits for effective curriculum development are burdened by the non-professional aspects of their job that they do not have the time or energy to work on curriculum development.

A rationale for differentiated staffing also derives from the advantages it promises and the problems it purports to solve. Kaplan's (1969) list of twenty-six advantages of a differentiated staff organization includes the following:

- Differentiated assignments for individual teachers are providing an improved and more meaningful education for students.
- Teaching roles are better defined through improved objectives.
- Differentiated staffing is developing a more favorable climate for the learner and for his full development to a greater degree than traditional patterns.
- Greater emphasis can be placed on the objectives of learning and curriculum development.
- Differentiated staffing relieves professionals of some non-professional duties.
- Differentiated staffing is providing a program that is more responsive to the needs, talent, abilities, and interests of each learner.
- Differentiated staffing provides more opportunity for group interaction among all persons and groups involved in the learning process.
- Differentiated staffing provides a better vehicle to recognize, utilize, and reward individual differences as to knowledge, skill, talents, and abilities of the staff.
- Differentiated staffing provides a better opportunities to demonstrate, identify, and improve strengths, weaknesses, competencies, and interests of the staff.
- Differentiated staffing provides more effective vehicles for staff involvement in . . . crucial educational decisions.
- Differentiated staffing provides a better climate for team action and decision making . . .
- Differentiated staffing provides more opportunities for learning to teach on the job.
- Differentiated staffing provides increased responsibility and more effective career approach for teachers; career patterns are clearly defined.

Differentiated Staffing - Some Concerns

Not all writers are equally or completely enthusiastic about differentiated staffing. The literature discloses some potential problem areas associated with the rationale and implementation of differentiated staffing.

The first of these concerns is related to the issue of the change process. The lag between the conceptual development of innovative practices and

their implementation has long been recognized. It is generally accepted that educators, teachers and administrators, are reluctant to deviate greatly from the status quo. In the case of differentiated staffing, Kaplan (1969) suggests the following as possible inhibitors to change:

- Most teachers are reluctant to subscribe to differentiated staffing for fear of destroying a structure they have lived in for so long.
- The introduction of non-professionals into professional roles is destructive to teachers.
- Teachers are reluctant to accept their individual differences as a fact of life; differentiated staffing is structured on this approach.
- Teachers are reluctant to accept the teacher's work load of differentiated staffing.
- Skeptics claim that this is merely a new educational fad, and is merely experimental now.
- Teachers think that differentiated staffing is merit pay in new clothes.
- Teachers believe that differentiated staffing introduces a new hierarchy in educational structures.

English (1969) suggests several areas of concern about differentiated staffing resulting from its newness. First, the redefinition of the role of teacher demands new role relationships between the middle level administration and teachers, and calls attention to the interrelatedness of these roles. Thus, resistance to change from middle level administrators, principals, and supervisors may result from a redefinition of their role. The second, and rather fundamental issue which English addresses, is known as the "iceberg" phenomenon; (i.e., the motivators of achievement for teachers). He feels that there is too much emphasis upon the monitoring rewards that differentiated staffing provides for teachers, whereas, the "self-actualizing" incentives play a much greater role. A third issue is that of efficiency. When differentiated staffing is implemented as an end to achieve cheaper education, it may become a threat to teachers.

Cocherille (1969) also points to three roadblocks to differentiated staffing. These are: (1) the reaction of organized teachers' groups to differentiated staffing, (2) certification and the breakdown of established practices, and (3) unwillingness to analyze carefully and describe role expectations clearly.

III. SUMMARY

While differentiated staffing is a relatively new concept, the literature does contain a number of models for its implementation. While not all authors are overwhelmingly favorable toward differentiated staffing, there is more than enough potential educational benefit to encourage its trial within a school system. Hence the decision was made in Mentor to actively pursue the idea for purposes of implementation.

CHAPTER II

THE MENTOR MODEL

I. INTRODUCTION

The concepts of differentiated staffing and particularly the Allen and McKenna models led the Mentor Public Schools to its program of differentiated staffing. While this decision to implement a program of differentiated staffing was not a precipitous one, it was accompanied by considerable excitement. The flavor of this excitement has been captured by Gardiner (1972) in the *APSS 1971-72 Yearbook*.

There are at least two ways to inaugurate differentiated staffing in a school district: one is to plan carefully for a period of years, hold workshops, pilot, evaluate and finally implement the pattern on more or less a full-scale basis, either in one school or in an entire system. The second method of inauguration is simply to build a building, the design of which facilitates differentiated staffing, put together a set of abstract assumptions, select staff according to the needs dictated by those assumptions, finalize attendance zones, and go!

It is certainly not our purpose to create a value judgment on which of the two is the more viable in this article, if indeed any such judgment could ever be legitimate. Suffice it to say that the Mentor Public Schools took the latter path for a variety of reasons, not the least of which was a community growth pattern that for the last six to eight years has introduced approximately 600 additional youngsters annually into the school system. Couple that growth pattern with a firm and on-going commitment by the Mentor Board of Education to the utilization, whenever and wherever possible, of sound new educational developments in the interests of improving the education of children in Mentor, and the reader has the essence of the reasoning leading to the opening in September, 1969, of Lake Elementary; and in 1970, of Orchard Hollow Elementary Schools, both of which feature the open-space instructional setting, and the deployment of a differentiated staff setting.

Clearly there was the need for additional physical facilities in the Mentor Public Schools. The question facing the Mentor Board of Education and Mentor School Administrators was one of determining the best instructional program for meeting the needs of the Mentor students and in terms of that instructional program, the best facility design which would (1) insure the implementation of that program and at the same time, (2) represent the most efficient utilization of existing fiscal resources, both operational and capital.

Accordingly, there ensued an intensive examination of the philosophical assumptions underlying teaching and learning, knowledge, and facility design. It was from that philosophical examination that the Mentor model of differentiated staffing was born.

The Mentor Model

The Mentor Model rests upon the following assumptions:

1. The education of an individual to be truly effective must be *personal and an individualized process* which takes place according to an instructional plan arrived at through the assessment of individual's learning capabilities, interests, and general growth potential.
2. The instructional program for the boys and girls attending this school is to be designed and implemented according to an organizational model which posits *the professional staff at the center of the educational decision-making process*. The educational program is, incidentally, expected to reflect the best of current and past curriculum practices.
3. The pattern of staff deployment and remuneration, which is differentiated and incorporates a hierarchical structure of professional and disciplinary talent, complementarily correlating personnel capabilities with the teaching-learning situation, *will prove to be more effective and efficient when measured against self-contained departmental, dual progress or some other staffing pattern or form of school organization*.
4. The educational environment, existing within this educational facility housing both professional and supportive staffs, a modern system of educational technology and

an individualized instruction program, *will positively affect pupil achievement* and will meet defined, behaviorally oriented educational goals and objectives.

5. The instructional program activities, educational process, etc., as incorporated into an educational whole at Lake Elementary School, are expected to take place *within established financial resource allocations for elementary education in the Mentor Public School System*. This assumption strongly implies the truth innovative improvement of education can take place within established resource parameters and that it should not be necessary for a school system to devote exceptionally high-resource allocations to the accomplishment of educational change and improvement.
6. Today's research and advanced technology make it possible to diagnose individual learning capabilities and styles, which when carried into the prescriptive phases of instruction will cause *the educational program -- teaching and learning -- to be more closely correlated to individual student achievement levels, interests, and general learning patterns*. Current instructional materials and media systems have the capability to greatly assist in the presentation of knowledge to children through appropriate sensory channels.
7. New knowledge is emerging about the dynamics of the school and about ways of *creating a climate within a social institution which fosters both critical and reflective thinking* - the mental process which provides the structure and the support individuals require in their search for the meaning of life.

The Mentor differentiated staffing model is at once unique and at the same time possesses elements found in many differentiated staffing models. These common elements are the differentiation of role responsibilities for professional and paraprofessional staff members and a method of differential compensation. The uniqueness of the Mentor model lies in its development with (1) a consideration of the unique characteristics of the student population and community, (2) within the financial parameters established for elementary

education within the school district, and (3) as only one aspect of a totally innovative concept of elementary education involving concepts of nongraded, open-space schools and individualized programs employing behavioral objectives.

The Mentor model utilizes a five-level hierarchy in the instructional setting which includes the following positions: (1) Director of Instruction (the traditional principal), whose instructional role is expanded through the employment of a business manager, (2) Master Teacher - Instructional Strategist, who is the leader of an instructional team and serves as the focal point in the decision-making process within the instructional setting, (3) Staff Teacher, a certificated professional, (4) Teacher Assistant and/or Teacher Intern, a paraprofessional whose training and development permits a close relationship with the instructional process, and (5) Clerical and/or Volunteer Aide, a paraprofessional whose training and development permits only limited involvement within the instructional team.

Figure 1 illustrates the role relationships within the Mentor model. A more complete description of the role and function of each position can be found in Appendix A.

II. PLANNING AND PRE-IMPLEMENTATION

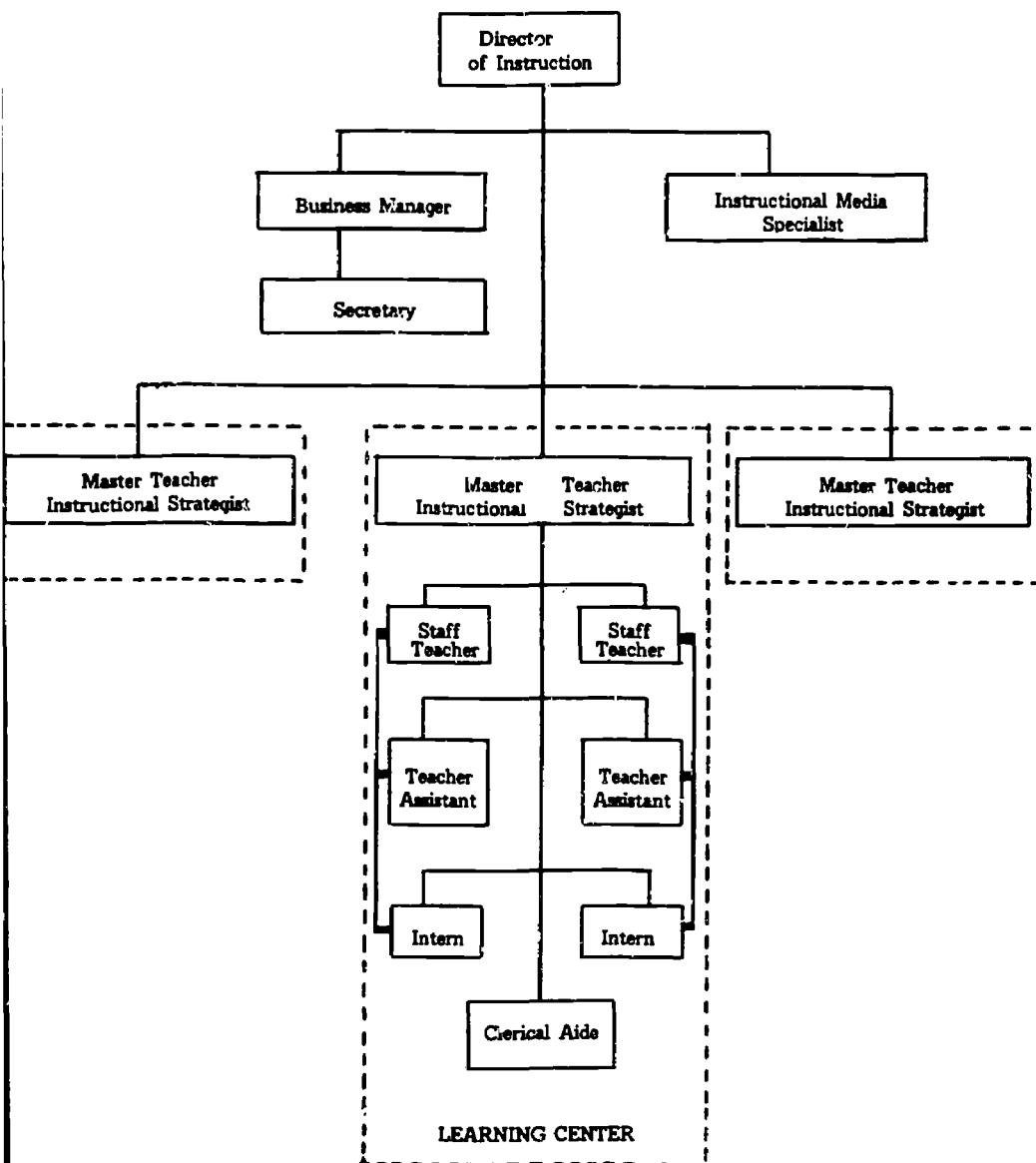
It is important to note that the conceptualization of the Mentor model occurred in the abstract. Thus, the model can be characterized as *theoretical* as opposed to an *empirical* model which is refined through careful piloting and testing prior to its actual implementation on a full-scale basis. This theoretical approach holds significant implications for the ultimate implementation of the program. However, such an approach minimizes the actual time lag between conceptualization of the notion and its actual implementation and maximizes the benefits to program improvement offered by immediate hands-on experience.

The following guidelines, based on the Mentor experience, may prove helpful to other school districts contemplating the use of such a theoretical model.

GUIDELINE 1

Develop a conceptual model based on philosophical examination of the following six variables:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| (a) Learner | (c) Staff | (e) Financial Resources |
| (b) Instructional Programs | (d) Educational Climate | (f) Physical Facilities |



— Direct relationship
 - Indirect relationship

FIGURE 1
 ROLE RELATIONSHIPS
 WITHIN THE MENTOR MODEL

Rationale

The rationale underlying the development of such a model is undoubtedly obvious. The model is seen as the logical result of a meaningful and comprehensive examination of philosophical assumptions underlying the utilization of existing staff and facilities. The newly designed model will reflect value judgments concerning these assumptions and will thereby provide the philosophical foundation for planning and ultimate implementation. The model should be subject to continuing revision as further implications become identified. It is nonetheless necessary as a basis from which to begin.

GUIDELINE 2

Develop a systematic, comprehensive master plan which explicitly addresses needs generated by and flowing from the conceptual model. These needs include the products of the interrelationships of the six variables mentioned in Guideline 1 such as:

- (a) *definition of instructional program*
- (b) *facility design*
- (c) *specification of staffing patterns and job description*
- (d) *staff selection*
- (e) *negotiation and agreements with teacher association*
- (f) *education of community*
- (g) *provisions for on-going evaluation*
- (h) *delineation of time-line*

Rationale

Once again the rationale is obvious. If, in fact, all activities necessary for a successful implementation of the conceptual model are to be attended to, a systematic planning effort is called for. Tasks need to be isolated, deadlines set, and responsibilities for task completion assigned. In the absence of such an arrangement, the risk is great that important portions of activity necessary to successful implementation will be overlooked to the ultimate detriment of the program. In an undertaking as complex as the implementation of the differentiated staffing pattern, scrupulous attention should be paid to the necessary detail.

GUIDELINE 3

Pre-implementation activities should address the following critical areas:

- (a) definition of instructional program*
- (b) facility design*
- (c) specification of staffing patterns and job description*
- (d) negotiation and agreements with teachers' association*
- (e) staff selection*
- (f) community education*
- (g) pre- and in-service training for staff participants*
- (h) provision for evaluation/assessment of differentiated staffing upon student and instructional personnel*

Rationale

As noted above, agreement upon the conceptual model assumes pre-implementation activities such as agreement on the definition of instructional program, staffing patterns, and facility design. Negotiation and agreement with local teachers' organizations concerning such matters as job description, role definitions, and salary schedules, is an essential prior step to the actual staffing. Absence of agreement on these critical topics of mutual concern to the association and the administration presents an unworkable, untenable situation. On the other hand, agreement can help facilitate staff selection. If job descriptions are adequately specified, particular personality traits essential to compatible operation within the differentiated team setting will have been isolated and the staffing selection will thus be improved.

The importance of educating the community surrounding the program school cannot be underemphasized. Parents will need to understand the nature of the changes involved by differentiated staffing patterns so that misunderstandings will be kept at a minimum during actual implementation.

Pre- and in-service training arrangements are of equally critical importance. Participating staff members who are unfamiliar with the special need for cooperation inherent in a differentiated approach and new role specifications and interrelationships, need to explore the logical implications of

of such changes. Such understanding will ease the transition and minimize the time lag between actual implementation and maximum benefits accruing from the new staffing patterns. By contrast, absence of such orientation activities will greatly increase difficulty of the transition. The new staffing pattern will most likely generate and identify new staff development needs. It is incumbent upon the school system to provide a series of staff development programs responsive to these newly-identified needs.

Finally, as a part of pre-implementation activities as assessment design needs to be structured such that outcomes of the implementation of differentiated staffing can be monitored. This will provide an acceptable data base for comparison of outcomes of differentiated staffing and those of traditionally staffed programs.

III. CONCLUSION

It was a combination of problems directly related to Guideline 3 which ultimately was to lead to the submission of a Title III ESEA preliminary proposal in December of 1970. This project will be discussed in much greater detail in Chapter III. However, it is well to note at this point that the general thrust was to provide a mechanism that could both assess the affect of differentiated staffing upon the various constituent variables and design and develop programs responsive to program and staff needs identified by the actual implementation.

CHAPTER III

THE ESEA TITLE III PROJECT AS AN AID TO IMPLEMENTATION

I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

In the process of self-assessment, significant voids in the Mentor implementation of differentiated staffing were identified in areas of evaluation and pre-service training. These voids became an active concern on the part of the Mentor Board of Education as well as the administration and participating instructional staff. Moving to remedy this situation, the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Robert C. Hemberger and his staff, developed a proposal for a Title III ESEA grant designed to assess the impact of the differentiated staffing and develop a program of professional and paraprofessional growth responsive to needs identified in the initial two years of the differentiated staffing implementation.

Initially, the project had three major goals. The first called for determining the effect of differentiated staffing upon students, staff, instructional program, and teaching and learning. The second goal defined a need to structure and implement a model program for individualized professional and paraprofessional growth to satisfy differentiated staff members, and differentiated staff role needs. The third and final goal of the project was to determine the effectiveness of the joint Cleveland State University-Mentor School District effort to improve teacher preparation by providing internship experience for senior level students in teacher education programs. The third major goal (assessment of the model teacher education component of the program) was dropped from the project at the end of the first project year. This decision was reached as a result of questions regarding its appropriateness raised by Title III Consultants at the Ohio Department of Education. Additionally, local resource constraints made attention to the third goal during the first project year difficult.

Therefore, throughout its duration, the project has concentrated upon the remaining two major goals:

1. Determining the effect of differentiated staffing upon students, staff, program, and the teaching-learning process, and
2. Structuring and implementing the model program

for individualized professional and paraprofessional growth needs, both individual and organizational.

With the approval of the project in February, 1971, resources became available to provide the mechanism necessary for assessment and for development of necessary programs so clearly perceived as needed. The ensuing three-year relationship between the project and the differentiated staffing implementation in the Mentor Public Schools can be characterized as one of continuous support by the project of on-going differentiated staffing in the school system.

II. ASSESSMENT

GUIDELINE 4

To assess the impact of differentiated staffing upon students and staff, there is a need for the structuring of a basic evaluation design which addresses the following components:

- (a) measurement criteria*
- (b) measurement methodology and instrumentation*
- (c) plan for analysis and interpretation*
- (d) collection of base-line data*
- (e) collection of follow-up data*
- (f) interpretation of data collected*
- (g) feedback to administration and staff*

Rationale

The present state of the art in evaluation and assessment have made imperative the specification of a comprehensive design prior to the beginning of any data collection for comparative use. Clearly such a design incorporates attention to each of the components specified above. Attempts at evaluation other than the comprehensive sort described herein, result in less than completely valid and reliable results, thus prohibiting the generalizability of the results. Accordingly, the comprehensive approach to evaluation is extremely critical when differentiated staffing, or for that matter any other educational innovation, is introduced into an on-going system.

III. DEVELOPMENT OF A PROGRAM OF STAFF GROWTH

GUIDELINE 5

Imperative to the development of meaningful in-service programs in a differentiated staff setting, is the attainment of participant consensus upon the definition of the instructional program. Ideally, consensus should exist on:

- (a) basic philosophical assumptions*
- (b) derivative philosophical goals*
- (c) the instructional program, and*
- (d) those competencies essential to the attainment of the educational goals*

Rationale

A prior step necessary to the specification of in-service programs responsive to needs identified in the differentiated staff setting is the specification of instructional competencies needed to carry out the instructional program and to attain its inherent educational goals. In order that such specification of competencies be meaningful, they must be perceived as accurate and valid by all participants. For this perception to occur, all participants must agree on the definition of the instructional program, the educational goals from which that instructional program is drawn, and the underlying philosophical assumptions giving rise to those goals. In the absence of such consensus, specification of the competencies becomes a literal impossibility.

Once competencies are specified, measurement techniques can be applied to determine objectively where staff needs exist with respect to improvement in particular competencies. This in turn generates the necessary information in terms of which a school system is able to structure responsive in-service programs.

The Mentor experience in this regard was particularly enlightening. A thorough discussion of this experience is included in Appendix B.

IV. RELATED GUIDELINES

As a result of experience with assessment gained during the project years, several corollary guidelines are suggested.

GUIDELINE 6

Faculties contemplating the utilization of individual teaching competency assessment techniques relative to a differentiated staffing pattern should be aware of the potential threat implicit in such approaches.

In the Mentor situation, initial efforts and specification of teaching competencies gave rise to certain feelings of apprehension concerning the manner in which such competencies could be used. It was found that such feelings were rooted deeply in the natural aversion of many teachers to evaluation out of concern for its misuse. Assurances of guaranteed anonymity as well as a completely open discussion of the situation were effectively utilized to reduce and finally eliminate the anxiety in the Mentor situation. Additionally, it should be noted that the particular Mentor school staffs in question were possessed of a relatively high degree of self-confidence and assurance which ultimately may have been heightened by this experience.

GUIDELINE 7

School systems utilizing differentiated staffing settings should develop an effective induction service for new staff members joining an on-going differentiated staff team.

The Mentor experience has indicated a certain transition period is necessary for new staff members unused to the differentiated staff pattern. Characteristic of learning center teams in the Mentor experience has been a cohesive rapport among individual team members. Turnover of staff rarely involves a complete team, therefore, new members entering an already established team setting must work themselves into an integrated relationship with past team members. It is advisable to arrange pre-service team planning sessions but also in terms of availability and location of materials, utilization of teaching strategies, assignment of new personnel to particularized roles, and familiarization with housekeeping procedures.

GUIDELINE 8

Staff selection should be made with particular care. Personality variables such as openness and personal commitment to new and demanding situations should be included in selection criteria.

There is little doubt that an instructional setting featuring a number of professionals and paraprofessionals working side-by-side poses the potential for some inter-personal conflict. The individuals involved must be open to constructive criticism and relatively secure in their role. Selection of staff should be made with this fact in mind.

Similarly, a differentiated staff assignment most definitely calls for a greater time commitment than in more traditional settings. Individuals selected must be aware of this need and prepared for such commitment.

V. SUMMARY

The Title III project was able to provide the resources necessary to facilitate those missing elements of pre-implementation planning; namely assessment and in-service program development. In the process of utilizing the mechanism thus provided, the staff participants encountered a series of problems, the resolution of which were most helpful in broadening the Mentor Public Schools experience in differentiated staffing.

The major objective with regard to the program development goal of the first project year was the identification of criteria in terms of which an assessment of the present staff competency levels could be conducted. The intent of the assessment was two-fold: 1) to assemble base-line data concerning staff competency levels, and 2) to provide the data base necessary to structure subsequent in-service development programs. The inability to agree upon program definition effectively precluded the specification of the necessary criteria, and redirected activities to the attainment of that program consensus and competency specification in the subsequent project years.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Mentor Public Schools in its continued effort to improve the quality of education for the students it serves, has gradually moved toward more individualization of instruction. As part of this move, the Board of Education authorized construction of two-open space elementary schools (a third has since opened in 1973) with differentiated staffing patterns.

Rather than carefully pilot and field test a conceptual model prior to full-scale implementation in Mentor, the decision was made to fully operationalize a differentiated staffing pattern after minimal preparation. It was felt that the problems encountered through this approach would be more than offset by the benefits accruing to the system.

Lake Elementary, opened in 1969; and Orchard Hollow Elementary, opened in 1970; provided a full-scale test of the Mentor Model of Differentiated Staffing. On the basis of this experience, two areas of critical need were identified. One of these was the need for the systematic assessment of the effects of differentiated staffing; the other, was the need for comprehensive pre- and in-service staff training. To assist in meeting these needs, an ESEA Title III grant was successfully applied for through the Ohio Department of Education.

This three-year project, which began in March of 1971, had as its major goals:

- 1 Determining the effect of differentiated staffing upon students, staff, program, and the teaching-learning process, and
- 2 Structuring and implementing a model program for individualized professional and paraprofessional growth needs, both individual and organizational.

One of the objectives of the project was the compilation of a series of guidelines, based on the Mentor experience which would be helpful to other school systems planning a program of differentiated staffing. The result of that objective is the present document.

Based on the Mentor experience, we would strongly recommend the approach of imposing a *theoretical* rather than an *empirical, well tested model* for the following reasons:

1. The effect of the differentiated staff approach, its problems and difficulties notwithstanding, strongly supported and gave direct impetus to the individualizing of instruction.
2. The differentiated staff approach, in its dependence on team interrelationships, caused many problems inherent in a truly individualized approach to surface quickly where they were rapidly resolved.
3. Teachers experienced professional growth and revitalization through the resolution of newly identified problems and the challenging dynamics of a new approach to the education task.
4. Student enthusiasm for and appreciation of the program were readily apparent.

It is our position that a lengthy period of preparation spanning one or more years prior to implementation, cannot be justified on the grounds of the Mentor experience. The implementation of any sweeping innovation will bring with it a host of problems regardless of preparation time. The degree to which such problems are eliminated by a lengthy period of preparation is more than balanced by the beneficial effects of early implementation.

The imposition of a theoretical rather than an empirical differentiated staffing model will be successful and should occur if provision has been made for the following:

1. The development of a thorough conceptual model based on a philosophical examination of educational variables.
2. Development of a systematic and comprehensive master plan for the development and implementation of the differentiated staffing conceptual model.
3. The carrying out of pre-implementation activities related to critical areas such as definition of instructional programs, staff selection, community education, and pre- and in-service training programs.
4. The structuring of a basic evaluation design addressing all of the pertinent and relative components

necessary to a comprehensive assessment of the proposed differentiated staffing program.

5. The attainment on the part of the participants with-
in the differentiated staff program of relative con-
sensus on definition of the instructional program.

In conclusion, with attention to the critical principles embodied in the above guidelines, the implementation of a differentiated staffing pattern can be smoothly and most effectively carried out.

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APPENDIX A

MENTOR MODEL MAJOR ROLE FUNCTIONS

Director of Instruction. The role of Director of Instruction is somewhat different from that of the typical principal. The Director's primary involvement is in the general area of curriculum and instruction rather than in administration. He is involved with the generation of new educational concepts, team planning, educational research, strategies of instruction, and facilitating the instructional progress of both students and staff.

Business Manager. The school Business Manager is an assistant to the Director of Instruction in the area of school business affairs, thus freeing him from many administrative duties. He works closely with the school secretary and is primarily responsible for establishing school business procedures, attendance accounting, lunchroom supervision, building maintenance, and supplies.

Master Teacher-Instructional Strategist. The Master Teacher-Instructional Strategist is the leader within the instructional team setting. Among his major responsibilities are (1) implementation of the instructional program, (2) curriculum and instructional design, (3) the improvement of teacher capabilities and performance, (4) the development and utilization of instructional media, and (5) evaluation of the effectiveness of instructional strategies in meeting objectives.

The Master Teacher-Instructional Strategist is the motivating force behind the instructional program. He is in reality a "teacher's teacher." His areas of responsibility demand a truly competent and dedicated professional whose skill and knowledge are typically found only in the best classroom teachers.

Staff Teacher. The Staff Teacher's job is essentially that which applies to all professional teachers employed in the Mentor Public Schools. The role of staff teacher within the differentiated staffing model is unique in the variety of role-relationships that exist with Master Teachers and paraprofessionals. Also unique to the staff teacher position is the focus upon special interest areas and competencies. Rather than be expected to do all things, teachers are expected to do professional things better.

Instructional Media Specialist. The Instructional Media Specialist is charged with the responsibility of assisting the instructional staff in their use of materials and equipment that will further enhance the educational program. The Instructional Media Specialist is part of the instructional team, assisting in his area of speciality, media.

Teacher Assistant/Intern. The position of Teacher Assistant is analogous to that of the teaching assistant in a university. The Teacher Assistant performs all functions under the direction of a professional staff member. Activities vary within the areas of materials preparation, clerical tasks, supervision of pupils, and related instruction activities.

Clerical Aide. The clerical aide provides service to the instructional team in terms of clerical needs of the team. This includes filing, correction of papers, typing, etc. Direction for task performance generally is provided by the professional staff, especially the Master Teacher.

APPENDIX B

COMPETENCY SPECIFICATION

It was the intent during the first year of the project to accomplish three basic objectives with regard to structuring of in-service programs. The first was to isolate and identify criteria/statements of competency necessary to measure present levels of staff performance. The second objective was the actual measurement of staff competency levels utilizing these newly-identified criteria. The third objective was to structure in-service programs responsive to perceived individual competency needs.

In the Mentor experience, not one of these objectives was accomplished in the first project year for a number of valid and legitimate reasons.

As project staff and participants attempted to define these criteria in a variety of workshop settings, it became apparent that participant consensus was needed concerning the nature of the program to which these criteria, (i.e., skills, competencies, and attitudes) were subservient. As project activities continued, it also became apparent that the most difficult task at hand was that of program definition. Further, those skills, competencies, and attitudes could not be agreed upon until consensus could be reached on the basic program they served. This utilization coupled with an awareness on the part of participant staff that such a situation existed constituted the major outcome of the program development goal activities in the first project year. The second year project direction in this regard was materially affected by this finding.

It is perhaps appropriate to note that not the least of the difficulties encountered by project staff and participants alike has been the need to create awareness on the part of the majority of participants of the fact that absence of consensus concerning the program definition poses as fundamental problem as it does. In order to facilitate that awareness, a variety of in-service workshops were held utilizing the services of several outside consultants. During these workshops, teachers were encouraged to examine via a rudimentary task analysis their perceptions of the current status of their role and function. The plan was then to obtain consensus on current status and to move to a projection of an ideal role and function pattern. It was the project staff's intention to structure the professional growth program in terms of the perceived ideal as agreed upon by the participants.

From an evolutionary point of view, it was precisely at this point that the teachers became aware of a fundamental disagreement among themselves concerning the philosophical nature of the program they purportedly were attempting to implement. Out of that realization grew the desire on the part of the participants to conduct a needs assessment in an effort to attain the needed consensus on program, mutual awareness of blockages to that program, and a series of alternatives designed to eliminate the defined problem. In order to facilitate this procedure, the participants created their own committee structure which featured a Clearing House Committee, chaired and staffed entirely by participants, and a series of contributing committees each oriented around operational program components including Program/Philosophy, Staffing Pattern, Communications, Materials, Interns, and Space Availability. These committees were charged with identifying problems impeding implementation of the program, structuring a rationale explaining those problems, and the listing of alternative solutions designed to eliminate the programmatic problems, with these alternatives to be ranked in order of priority.

These reports were then submitted to the Clearing House Committee, which in turn discussed them at length, reached conclusions concerning each report, recorded these conclusions, and disseminated both the original report and the Clearing House Committee conclusions concerning same to the entire group of program participants.

Committee work was completed and reviewed by the Clearing House Committee. It served as a basis for second year project activities designed to facilitate attainment of project objectives.

Projected activities associated with the specification of teaching competencies (criteria of technical capabilities, attitudinal sets, role relationships, etc.) proceeded smoothly to their logical culmination following the attainment of consensus upon instructional programs and goals. In roughly sequential order, the following activities were accomplished:

- a) the planning of a process by which the staff could define and record teaching competency necessary to conduct the instructional program leading to the attainment of programmatic goals,
- b) the actual definition of specific staff competencies with the help of an outside consultant,
- c) the design of a method for the assessment of staff com-

petencies including the development of the necessary instrumentation and an application process.

- d) the actual assessment of existing instructional staff competency levels; i.e., the analysis of data collected in the assessment effort,
- e) the definition and structuring of a model pattern of staff deployment utilizing identified competency levels, and
- f) the initial structuring of a program of professional in-service development directly related to perceived staff competency training needs